



SAFE MINISTRY POLICY

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1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To establish and maintain safe and healthy environments for all people associated with the Diocese of North West Australia ("the Diocese"), especially children and other vulnerable people.
- 1.2 To facilitate compliance with federal, state and church legislation as it relates to protecting the safety of all people, especially children and other vulnerable persons.
- 1.3 To help the Diocese obey Jesus' command: "You shall love your neighbour as yourself" (Matthew 19.19, Matthew 22.39, Mark 12.31, Romans 13.9, Galatians 5.4, James 2.8).

2 SCOPE

- 2.1 This policy applies to all people in the Diocese who participate in our programs or visit our sites, including:
 - a) all church workers;
 - b) participants in church activities and users of church facilities; and
 - c) visitors, including contractors and other external service providers.

3 POLICY STATEMENT

- 3.1 We are committed to the physical, emotional and spiritual welfare of all people, particularly those within our own community.
- 3.2 We have zero tolerance for all forms of abuse, neglect, racism and domestic/family violence.
- 3.3 To support the health and safety of all people connected to our churches, the Diocese will:
 - a) comply with all federal, state and church laws related to the safety of children and other vulnerable persons;

- b) carefully recruit, induct and support all our workers including regular training in Safe Ministry practices;
 - c) require Church Workers to report, on reasonable grounds, all concerns about people at church in relation to risk of harm and / or abuse, and all instances where they suspect another church worker has engaged in misconduct, including all allegations of Reportable Conduct, to:
 - i) the police, where there is immediate danger or in a life-threatening situation;
 - ii) the Department of Communities; where the concern involves a child;
 - iii) The Director of Professional Standards (Safe Ministry Helpline 1800 070 5110); and
 - iv) the Minister-in-Charge or the Bishop.
 - d) assist the aforementioned authorities with investigations into reported incidents of abuse in the Diocese;
 - e) respond promptly to any other concern related to the safety of children or other vulnerable persons in the Diocese with a commitment to child friendly, appropriate and expedient responses to all incidents, accidents and/or child protection concerns, and when necessary convening investigations for the Diocesan Disciplinary Tribunal; and
 - f) offer support to any person who has suffered abuse in our programs or by a Church Worker.
 - g) take reasonable and legal steps to prevent any person known to have abused children or other vulnerable persons from gaining access to children or vulnerable persons in our programs or on our sites.
- 3.4 We require all who hold leadership positions in the Diocese to abide by 'Faithfulness in Service: A National Code for Personal Behaviour and the Practice of Pastoral Ministry by Clergy and Church Workers' ('Faithfulness in Service'), or an equivalent code of conduct approved by Diocesan Council as per the *Safe Ministry to Children Statute 2022*.
- 3.5 We acknowledge the primary role of parents and caregivers in the safety of children and persons with a disability. We will listen to the safety concerns of parents and caregivers, respond to those concerns as appropriate and communicate with them about matters related to this policy.
- 3.6 We acknowledge the role of children and disabled persons in their own safety. We will listen to the safety concerns of children and disabled persons, respond to those concerns as appropriate and communicate with them about matters related to this policy with sensitivity to age, ability and culture.
- 3.7 We require the Minister-in-charge of each ministry centre to carefully recruit, appoint, train and support all its workers, and screen contractors, according to the relevant safe and suitable workers procedures.
- 3.8 Church workers in the Diocese must submit to the requirements for screening, training and safe ministry that are set out in the Worker Selection Procedure.
- 3.9 A person performing a function under this Policy is to keep confidential any personal information obtained in the course of fulfilling that function, except where its disclosure is required as per the *Safe Ministry to Children Statute 2022*.
- 3.10 It is serious breach of this Policy (that is it is misconduct) for any church worker to contravene any related procedure, or any regulation in law, in relation to the safety and protection of people at church.

4 RESPONSIBILITIES

All Church Workers will comply with all elements of the policy in their own spheres of responsibility. In addition, the following individuals and groups will fulfil the following responsibilities in those spheres:

The Bishop

- 4.1 The Bishop holds responsibility for safety in the Diocese, which he will promote by:
- a) leading compliance with this policy in all the governance bodies he chairs, including Synod, Diocesan Council, Diocesan Trustees and the Diocesan Disciplinary Tribunal (and in the Diocesan Office);
 - b) recruiting, inducting and supporting all licenced church workers according to Diocesan procedures; and

- c) assisting the Safety Coordinator with his or her responsibilities as appropriate (see below).
- d) Fulfilling the requirements of the position of “Head of a Relevant Entity” in accordance with the Reportable Conduct Scheme (see *Parliamentary Commissioner Amendment (Reportable Conduct) Act 2022 Subdivision 3- 19R*).

Diocesan Council

- 4.2 Diocesan Council will help the Bishop fulfil his responsibility for safety by:
- a) recommending a Safety Coordinator who will monitor and promote compliance with this policy;
 - b) approving Safe Ministry regulations (including this policy); and
 - c) approving Safe Ministry training programs.
 - d) regularly reviewing and improving statutes, policies and procedures related to child safety & in relation to the prevention of and investigating allegations of Reportable Conduct.

The Registrar

- 4.3 The Registrar will help the Bishop fulfil his responsibility for safety by:
- a) making all documentation related to this policy available to church workers and the public;
 - b) communicating targeted, relevant, specific information about this policy across the Diocese;
 - c) maintaining records relevant to this policy according to the Privacy Policy; and
 - d) conducting a review of this policy and compliance with it every three years.

Safety Coordinator

- 4.4 The Safety Coordinator will help the Bishop fulfil his responsibility for safety by:
- a) assisting the Bishop with his responsibilities in this policy as appropriate (see above);
 - b) monitoring compliance with this policy in ministry centres via quarterly returns and incidental queries; and
 - c) reporting on compliance with this policy to the Bishop, Diocesan Council and Synod.

Ministers-in-Charge

- 4.5 Under the Bishop, Ministers-in-charge hold responsibility for safety in their ministry centres, which they will promote by:
- a) participating in Safe Ministry training for ministry leaders as approved by Diocesan Council;
 - b) reporting on Safe Ministry to the Bishop, Registrar and Safety Coordinator via quarterly returns;
 - c) organising Safe Ministry training and support for all workers in the ministry centre; and
 - d) maintaining records relevant to this policy according to the Privacy Policy.

Ministry Centre Committees

- 4.6 Ministry centre governing group will help Ministers-in-charge fulfil their responsibilities for safety by:
- a) reviewing ministry programs and events, considering duty of care and foreseeable risks;
 - b) ensuring that Diocesan-approved Safe Ministry signage is posted in the ministry centre;
 - c) receive a report on Safe Ministry at all regular meetings in accordance with the Ministry Centre Safety Checklist (attached);
 - d) appointing a Safe Ministry Officer to aid compliance with this policy in the ministry centre (optional).

Church Workers (Paid and Unpaid, Ordained and Lay)

- 4.7 Church Workers will help Ministers-in-charge fulfil their responsibilities for safety by:

- a) Upholding the commitments to people as they relate to their role under this policy, including but not limited to reporting all concerns of harm, abuse, misconduct including Reportable Conduct according to Diocesan Procedure.
- b) participating in Safe Ministry training approved by Diocesan Council as often as required;
- c) when leading any program involving children or other vulnerable persons, providing a safety briefing, drawing attention to signage related to Safe Ministry.
- d) when leading or helping with any program involving children or other vulnerable persons, promoting open communication with participants, parents and other caregivers on safety matters; and
- e) refrain from taking and/or distributing photographs of children or other vulnerable persons in ministry programs without the permission of the program leader and the relevant parent(s) or caregiver(s).

5 DEFINITIONS

- 5.1 Terms not defined in this document may be found in the Diocesan Glossary.
- 5.2 **Ministry:** work of a religious nature, including that conducted by a religious practitioner or a member of his church community and any other work that supports this work, such as work of an administrative nature.
- 5.3 **Safe Ministry:** ministry that minimises harm to the people involved with this ministry.
- 5.4 **Minister-in-charge:** the most senior officer holder in a ministry centre.
- 5.5 **Church Worker** means a person aged 13 years or older undertaking any ministry in the Diocese:
- a. who is licensed or authorised by the Bishop; or
 - b. who is employed by a Church body; or
 - c. who, for payment or not, holds a position or performs a function with the actual or apparent authority of a Church authority or Church body;
- 5.6 **Ministry centre governing group:** committee responsible for the operation of a ministry centre, including but not limited to Parish Council, Mission to Seafarers Management Committee, etc.
- 5.7 **Reportable Conduct Scheme** means the scheme established by Reportable Conduct Scheme (see *Parliamentary Commissioner Amendment (Reportable Conduct) Act 2022*, and includes allegations against employees, whether or not a criminal proceeding in relation to the conduct has been commenced or concluded and whether the conduct occurred before, on or after commencement day (a) a sexual offence; (b) sexual misconduct; (c) a physical assault committed against, with or in the presence of, a child; (d) an offence prescribed by the Reportable Conduct regulations.

6 RELATED LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

Government legislation:

Children and Community Services Act 2004 (WA)

Working with Children (Criminal Record Checking) Act 2004 (WA)

Working with Children (Criminal Record Checking) Regulations 2005

Commissioner for Children and Young People Act 2006 (WA)

Child Care Services Act 2007 (WA)

Parliamentary Commissioner Amendment (Reportable Conduct) Act 2022

Work Health and Safety Act 2020

Work Health and Safety (General) Regulations 2022

Civil Liability Act 2002 (Child Sexual abuse Actions Part 2A)

Church legislation:

Safe Ministry to Children Statute 2022

Church Administration Statute 2020

Professional Standards Statute 2016
 Episcopal Standards Statute 2016
 Disclosure of Information Canon 2017
 Redress for Survivors of Abuse Canon 2017
 Holy Orders (Removal from Exercise of Ministry) Canon 2017
 National Register Canon 2007
 Offences Canon 1962
 Special Tribunal Canon 2007

Other related documents:

Faithfulness in Service, located at: <https://anglican.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/1442-FIS-Consolidated-November-2016-current-at-190918.pdf>

National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, located at: <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/National%20Principles%20for%20Child%20Safe%20Organisations.pdf>

Worker Selection Procedure
 Worker Training Procedure
 Worker Support Procedure
 Contractor Appointment Procedure
 Privacy Policy
 Safe Program Policy
 Responding to Concerns Policy
 Policy for Safe Ministry with Persons of Concern

7 QUESTIONS & FEEDBACK

7.1 Church members who have any questions about this regulation or who wish to provide feedback about this document should contact the Diocesan Registrar at registrar@anglicandnwa.org.

8 APPROVAL AND REVIEW DETAILS

Certifications and Assent	Details	Signature	Date
Chair of Committees	Certified as printed in accordance with the regulation as reported		
Registrar	Certified as passed by the Diocesan Council		
Bishop	Assented		
Approval and Review	Details		
Approval Authority	Diocesan Council		
Administrator	Diocesan Registrar		
Next Review Date			
Approval and Amendment History	Details		
Original Approval Authority and Date	31/05/2023		
Notes	This document replaces the Safe Ministry Policy dated 11/09/2019, which in turn replaced the Safe Ministry Policy dated 14/11/2018, which in turn replaced the Draft Safe Ministry Policy dated 29/09/2018 and the Draft Safe Ministry Implementation Procedure and the Draft Child Safety Procedure. It also replaces the Draft Safe and Suitable Workers Policy.		

9 APPENDIX

Ministry Centre Safety Checklist

MINISTRY CENTRE SAFETY CHECKLIST

It is the responsibility of the ministry centre governing group to...

	Item	Completed
1.	Bring the Safe Ministry Policy to the attention of the congregation and other ministry centre users.	
2.	Identify and notify workers who need to complete Safe Ministry Training (induction or refresher) in the coming year.	
3.	Check the currency of Working with Children Check registration for anyone working with children.	
4.	Ensure those in ministry to children and vulnerable persons or who are governors (member of a council/board/committee) have completed a Safe Ministry Questionnaire.	
5.	Ensure that a Worker Selection Checklist* has been completed for all workers and the completed checklist submitted to the governing group (council/board/committee) for endorsement.	
6.	Ensure that all church workers who transport people as part of a ministry program have received a copy of the Diocesan Transportation Procedure* and have completed the Approved Driver Application.	
7.	Ensure all ministry programs have been reviewed by the governing group.	
8.	Ensure that a report on safety has been provided to the Diocesan Office in the last 3 months.	
9.	Ensure that the Property Inspection Checklist has been completed in the last 12 months.	

*Refer to the Worker Selection Procedure

*Refer to the Transportation Procedure